

STEP Academy Trust

Disability Access Statement

Three Year Plan

Publication Date: September 2022

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Introduction

All policies, procedures, practices and systems are regularly reviewed to reflect the Trust's anti-racist stance and commitment to equality.

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 and aim to promote a positive and welcoming culture where all forms of discrimination are actively challenged and a systemic approach to eradicating discrimination is seated at the heart of our organisation. STEP policies reflect our commitment to ensuring unbiased treatment that pupils, parents, carers, employees and prospective employees are entitled to expect. We believe that every individual has the right to be valued, respected and offered equal opportunities, access and treatment. STEP Academy Trust is committed to providing an inclusive and diverse culture and to eradicating discrimination and stereotyping to make our Academies truly inclusive and promote high achievement for all

Benedict Academy is committed to a fair and equal treatment of all individuals regardless of disablement. Benedict Academy will welcome applications from people with disabilities to join our community as students and employees.

Aim

The aims of this statement are to ensure that:

- applications for admission from all potential students are considered in line with the published admission arrangements;
- applications for employment are considered and assessed on the basis of the applicants' aptitudes, abilities and qualifications;
- disabled employees and students have access to the appropriate support and adaptations to enable them to be fully included in the life of Benedict Academy.
- the views of individual students or employees are taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed;
- all students are fully integrated into Benedict Academy and individual needs are assessed and supported as far as is practicable within a mainstream educational establishment;
- employees working with disabled people, either as colleagues or as students, have appropriate information, support and training;
- Benedict Academy takes steps to enable employees and students who become disabled during their time at Benedict Academy to continue in their chosen career or course of study as far as is practicable; disabled members of the public can fully participate in public events held within Benedict Academy;
- so far as is reasonably practicable, Benedict Academy premises are accessible and safe for

- disabled people; and
- no disabled student or employee is treated less favourably as a result of their disability.

Operation

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)/Inclusion Manager will be responsible for ensuring that employees and parents/guardians are made aware of this policy and that the Disability Code of Practice set out below is followed. (Throughout this policy, the term “parents/guardians” means all those having parental responsibility for a child).

The Headteacher and the Academy Committee will have overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy statement is implemented.

Disability Code of Practice

Environment

Any future building projects will be considered at the planning stage for accessibility and usability by people with disabilities.

Evacuation procedures and escape routes for students and employees with disabilities will be carefully planned and published.

Children

Applications will be considered in line with the published admission arrangements for all students. An applicant’s disability will not prevent him/her from being offered a place and integrated into Benedict Academy unless:

- the content, structure and delivery of the curriculum are such that the student would be prevented from fulfilling a major part of it; or
- Benedict Academy would be unable to provide suitably trained employees or facilities to allow the requirements of the National Curriculum to be met.

Benedict Academy will aim to provide students with a disability with the appropriate support to enable them to be fully integrated. Benedict Academy will not treat a student with a disability less favourably than any other student and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the full participation and integration of disabled students.

As far as resources allow, the needs of disabled students will be taken into account in the design, structure and flexibility of teaching methods and delivery. Where a curriculum area is organised in such a way that a disabled student cannot fully participate, alternative provision will be made.

Students with a disability or who become disabled whilst studying at Benedict Academy will be given appropriate support from employees to enable them to have equal access to the curriculum. Individual needs will be considered and addressed by all curriculum areas in collaboration with the SENCO/Inclusion Manager and an Individual Education Plan drawn up on an annual basis.

Benedict Academy recognises that special arrangements may be required to enable students with disabilities, including specific learning difficulties, to exhibit their capabilities and knowledge. Special arrangements will be made to enable such students to perform to the best of their ability

by meeting their individual needs. Benedict Academy will liaise with the relevant Examination Boards in such instances. Students and parents/guardians will be made fully aware of the process for making special arrangements for assessment and examinations by the SENCO/Inclusion Manager.

Employees

Wherever practicable, Benedict Academy will:

- consider and seek to employ disabled people in jobs suited to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications in line with the Equality Act (2010) and Disability Discrimination Act (2005);
- ensure that employees with disabilities are considered for promotion according to their aptitudes, abilities and qualifications;
- ensure that disabled employees are not disadvantaged when the renewal of fixed-term contracts is being considered.

Employees, who become disabled during their employment with Benedict Academy, so far as is practicable, will continue to remain employed by Benedict Academy subject to review by the Headteacher and the Academy Committee. This review will assess their ability to carry out the duties of their post. Help from related professional organisations may also be sought when considering not only the possible effects of the disability but also other consequential disadvantages, such as loss of status or financial loss.

Benedict Academy will endeavour to make any reasonable adjustments to enable the employee to continue in post. However, options might include:

- continuing in the same post;
- a gradual return to work;
- a reduction in hours;
- redeployment;
- premature retirement on grounds of incapacity;
- termination of employment.

In cases where a disability is a degenerative, progressive condition that develops over time, careful consideration should be given to the selection of the most appropriate option(s).

Benedict Academy will make reasonable changes to work practices and, where possible, the workplace to enable disabled people to work successfully, including those employees who become disabled whilst employed.

Benedict Academy will ensure that a programme of training is offered to employees to increase their awareness of students with disabilities and inform them of appropriate action to be taken when delivering the curriculum. Teaching assistants will support teaching staff as required to help ensure that disabled students have equal access to the curriculum.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Academy Committee and Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of Benedict Academy's Disability Access Statement at specified intervals.

Access Statement

- All children will be able to easily access all classrooms, toilets, and play areas.
- A ramp is available for those who may require it to enter the main part of the building.
- A disabled toilet is also available for those who may require it.
- There will be easy access to the school playground, via two main gates. There will be a disabled parking bay next to one of the gates.

Arrangements for 2022/23

- The views of individual students, parents, employees, governors and trustees will be taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- The views of the Health and Safety Officer will be taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- We will review our pupil intake to assess any needs that may arise.

Arrangements for 2023/24

- The views of individual students, parents, employees, governors and trustees will be taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- The views of the Health and Safety Officer will be taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- We will review our pupil intake to assess any needs that may arise.

Arrangements for 2024/25

- The views of individual students, parents, employees, governors and trustees will be taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- The views of the Health and Safety Officer will be taken into account at all times when their requirements are being assessed.
- We will review our pupil intake to assess any needs that may arise.

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	ACHIEVEMENT
Training for teachers on differentiating the curriculum	Undertake an audit of staff training requirements	All teachers are able to more fully meet the requirements of disabled students' needs with regards to accessing the curriculum. Meeting time is devoted to sharing of good practise/differentiated resources.	Ongoing	Increase in access to the Curriculum. Needs of all students are met
Training for teachers on scaffolding and adapting the curriculum.	Review the specific needs for pupils living with a disability, in terms of basic daily living skills, relationships and future aspirations.	Teachers are aware of the relevant issues and can ensure that this group has equality of access to life- preparation learning. The use of other professional partners has been made available.	Ongoing	Needs of all students are met. Good progress made by all learners.
All out-of Benedict Academy activities are planned to ensure the participation of the whole range of students.	Review all out-of-Academy provision to ensure compliance with legislation.	All out-of-Academy activities will be conducted in an inclusive environment with providers that comply with all current and future legislative requirements.	Ongoing	Increase in access to all Benedict Academy activities for all disabled pupils.
Classrooms are optimally organised to promote the participation and independence of all students.	Review and implement a preferred layout of furniture and equipment to support the learning process.	Lessons start on time without the need to make adjustments to accommodate the needs of individual students. All students are included in the learning.	Ongoing	Increase in access to the Curriculum. Needs of all students are met.

Improving the Delivery of Written Information

TARGET	STRATEGY	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	ACHIEVEMENT
Availability of written material in alternative formats	Benedict Academy will make itself aware of the services available for converting written information into alternative formats as required.	Benedict Academy will be able to provide written information in different formats when required for individual purposes as required.	Ongoing	Delivery of information to students improved
Make available Benedict Academy prospectus and other information for parents and carers on website and in paper format.	Review all Benedict Academy publications and promote the availability in different formats	All Benedict Academy information available for all.	Ongoing	Delivery of Benedict Academy information to parents and the local community improved.
Review documentation with a view of ensuring accessibility for students with visual impairment.	Get advice on alternative formats and use of ICT software to produce customised materials as required.	All Benedict Academy information available for all as required.	Ongoing	Delivery of Benedict Academy information to students & parents with visual difficulties improved.
Ensure that parents and carers receive information from Benedict Academy in a format of their choice.	Survey parents to gain information regarding their choice of format (paper or email communications).	Parents and carers will receive information in the medium of their choice.	Ongoing	Benedict Academy is more effective in meeting the communication choices of parents and carers. Staff will be aware of preferred format for communications amongst parents/carers
Ensure that all Benedict Academy communications use plain English	A member of SLT to check all communications to parents/carers before distribution.	All communications will be easy to read and have clarity of purpose.	Ongoing	Parents and carers will be clear as to purpose of communications.